

Retired Air Force Fire Chief's Network
QUARTERLY NETWORK NEWS



*Legendary Pioneers Who Reminisce About
the Past but Focus on the Future*

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<http://www.dodfire.com/Retirees.htm>



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Founded – 1990 by Doug Courchene

October - December 2007



TAPS

Chief Randy Frederic Schryer
September 18, 1956 to August 8, 2007

Chief Schryer, 50, passed away suddenly at his home in Tucson AZ, on August 8, 2007. He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Julieta Schryer; their two children, Randy L. Schryer and Abigail Schryer; a nephew Jesus Leon; his parents, Bernard and Joyce Schryer; two sisters, Brenda Martin and Lisa McDonough of



Ticonderoga, NY; his wife's family of Hermosillo, Sonora; and several nieces and nephews. Randy was born on September 18, 1956 in Ticonderoga NY. He graduated from Ticonderoga High School in 1974. Following graduation, he joined the United States Air Force where he served his country for eight years. After leaving the Air Force, he worked at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson AZ where he advanced through the ranks of the fire department, retiring after 32 years of service as Fire Chief on June 1, 2007. Randy will be remembered by his family and friends as a

dedicated husband and father. His sense of humor, spaghetti, being a great listener and always willing to lend a hand were great tributes. He was loved by all who knew him and will be sadly missed.

On behalf of the Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs, we extend condolences to the Schryer family and friends. I met Randy in 1991 at Davis Monthan AFB while performing a First Article OT&E for a new "Jaw's of Life" rescue tool, on B-52 Bombers stored in Davis Monthan AFB's bone yard. Randy was the Fire Training Officer and my liaison point of contact at Davis Monthan AFB. His dedication and professionalism contributed to the successful completion of this important test and evaluation that resulted in the "Jaws" improvement for aircraft. A "Fallen Firefighter" Ceremony will honor Randy at the next reunion of Retired Air Force Fire Chiefs in 2009. Randy will be remembered for his contributions to Air Force Fire Protection, his country and friends....Editor

Fallen firefighter memorialized at Balad

by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

5/8/2007 - BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- The team of Airmen and Soldiers of the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's Fire Protection Flight gathered during a solemn "Final Alarm" ceremony May 4 at Fire Station number one to honor an Airman who made the ultimate sacrifice as a firefighter while on duty in Iraq. "When our rotation arrived here [AEF 5/6], we all knew of the passing of Sergeant Rangel while performing firefighter duties in Iraq," said Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Remedies, 332 ECES Fire Chief during the ceremony. "We got together to design and construct a lasting memorial in his honor at our new station. We made a Maltese cross out of a humvee door and placed it appropriately as part of a monument for our memorial to symbolize his sacrifice."

Also part of the memorial is a barrier art mural depicting a firefighter in front of the New York City skyline and the statue of liberty with a message that reads "Honoring Yesterday's Heroes, Today's Warrior's, and Tomorrow's Leaders." The U.S Flag proudly waves on a newly raised flagpole in front of the wall.

"Staff Sgt. Ray Rangel was assigned to Balad AB as a firefighter and was responsible for the Rescue Air Mobility Squad (RAMS) Team," said Chief Remedies during the ceremony. The chief then went on to describe the events of Feb. 13, 2005, stating the facts involved with the rescue attempt during which Sergeant Rangel gave his life.

On that day, Sergeant Rangel and his team were called to duty in response to a humvee accident where it was reported the vehicle had rolled over with Soldiers trapped inside. Sergeant Rangel's team reacted quickly, gathered their equipment, and boarded a Blackhawk helicopter at Balad and headed for the accident scene.

What the RAMS team found was the humvee

had actually rolled into the 50-foot-wide Isaki Canal, swollen and flowing rapidly from recent heavy rains. The humvee had settled upside down in the middle of the canal and was under water except for the left rear tire, a portion of the rear bumper, and a small part of the right, rear tire.

Members of Sergeant Rangel's team attempted to reach the vehicle where Soldiers were still trapped inside. Other Soldiers who were also attempting a rescue were trapped on top of the vehicle. Sergeant Rangel's team entered the water and made their way to the vehicle, battling the frigid water and swift current. However, one of their way to the vehicle, battling the frigid water and swift current, one of his Airmen lost their grasp of the vehicle and began to drift away in the fast flowing current. Sergeant Rangel, still on the shore, slid down the sloping embankment in an attempt to reach his fellow Airmen. He lost his footing as he reached out and fell into the stream. Still wearing his body armor, the current was too strong for Sergeant Rangel to overcome, and he was quickly swept away.

Sergeant Rangel, a San Antonio native, was 29 at the time, and was deployed here from the 7th Civil Engineer Squadron, Dyess AFB, Texas, where there is another memorial in his honor. According to Chief Remedies, Sergeant Rangel is the only DoD firefighter to die while in the line of duty as a firefighter in Iraq.

Soon after the tragedy, Air Force firefighters worldwide participated in a one-minute "final alarm" ceremony Feb. 16, 2005, honoring Sergeant Rangel. Officials estimate more than 3,900 active-duty firefighters, countless civilian firefighters and thousands of other service members at Air Force installations around the world participated in the ceremony. The fire department bell is traditionally rung to signal the start of a shift, the call for assistance, successful completion of a day, and in this case, the passing of a hero.

The final alarm also referred to, as "Signal 5-5-

5," is a long-held tradition in America. It started when red fire alarm boxes were found on city streets throughout the country. These made use of telegraph signals to call local dispatchers, who would in turn signal the appropriate fire station to respond to a fire. The alarm signified the return to quarters. When a firefighter fell in the line of duty, the dispatcher would tap out the signal three times to notify all stations as a sign of honor and respect. For those honored in this way, the signal represents the end of their duties, and for comrades, the sounding of the alarm signals the firefighters "coming home."

Sergeant Rangel gave his all so that others may go home alive.



BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- Air Force and Army firefighters from the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's fire department flight stand in formation May 4 prior to the unveiling of a memorial erected in honor of Staff Sgt. Ray Rangel, who died in the line of duty as a firefighter Feb. 13, 2005 while attempting to save the lives of Soldiers in a humvee that overturned in a canal full of rushing water. Sergeant Rangel was deployed to the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron here as a firefighter. The San Antonio native's home unit was the 7th Civil Engineer Squadron, Dyess AFB, Texas.



Stamp Fund Contributors

The QNN is privately

funded by contributions. Past quarter, contributors are: Chief Jim Deal, Colorado Springs, CO; Chief Marvin Gunderson marvin.gunderson@knox.army.mil ; Chief Donato Jaso, Austin, TX; Chief Doug Courchene dougecourchene@aol.com; Chief George Hall ifac@cox.net; Chief Joe Cheringa JOESKIPP@aol.com; Chief Tom Smith lennaboggs@tomsmithfire.com or www.tomsmithfire.com; Chief Bob Barrow chief.one@cox.net; Chief Hoyd "Sandy" Sanders Sandy6T5@comcast.net; Chief William Ryan chfChf2@comcast.net . E-mail address is used to promote "networking" where possible. Contributions are greatly appreciated. Donations help defray postage and publishing cost and they are voluntary as no membership fees are charged. Contact the Editor for more information.

Charlie and Linde Richardson go to Germany



Frankfurt/Hahn Airport Fire Station and Control Tower are still in use. The base is in a big transformation from military to civilian use as a major airport. The base is now a commercial airport called Frankfurt/Hahn and is used mostly by discount airlines like Ryan Air, Air Berlin and others. You can go back but it is never the same. How many times have you hear that in a lifetime? It is so true. In early October 2007, Linde and I had the pleasure of returning to Hahn Air Base, Germany. We were stationed there from January 1969 to June 1973...lots of memories. The first thing we noticed was that many of the old buildings are gone. The CE complex, Vehicle maintenance, the exchange and gym are all gone, as is the old "front gate." Half of the housing area is used by the German Police for a school. The other half is vacant. Our old apartment is in the vacant section and some

of the windows are broken; looks very bad. It's hard to believe that we lived there once. B-50, the road that links Hahn with the outside world is being rebuilt to four lanes and will by-pass the villages along the way. Some of the small villages look the same as they did when we were there. Sohren, Kastellun and Irmenach, to name a few. While at Hahn, I had my first Fire Chief job. It was a little ammunition depot at Morbach. I was there when I was promoted to TSgt. Three military personnel and local nationals made up the Fire Department. I stayed there until the unit came under the command of the 50th TFW. The fire chief at Hahn pulled me back on the base and I was Assistant Chief of Ops for a while. We had an opportunity to return to Hahn numerous times over the years. It basically stayed the same as long as it was occupied by the US Air Force. The Golf course is still in use and they are planning on building a new clubhouse soon. It was nice to see the area and some friends (Bryce Mason and wife Tina) again, but as the old saying goes, "It's never the same". Charlie, QNN Associate Editor.

Sandy's Travelogue...



Charlie sounds like you and Linde had a good trip. It is certainly sad what is going on in the USAFE theater of operations. The reductions of the bases and the amount of operations tempo is making it quite difficult for the troops. Just read they have 10% of their force deployed at all times. Then the reduction which is happening with the force is going to make it even more difficult for the troops. Makes one wonder who is minding the store and looking out for them. I do not believe senior leadership is engaged with what is going on in the lives of folks that are trying to keep the Air Force running. I have not heard anything about the reduction in the Singing

Sergeants, Tops in Blue, Air Force Bands, or any of the feel good programs. Just Sandy ranting. I paid too much a price (45 years) to see an institution I love start imploding on itself. Anyway good to hear from you. Stay in touch.... *Sandy - QNN Associate Editor*

Pioneers with Intent – a Squeal

Pioneers with Intent -Memoirs of an Air Force Firefighter, by Chief Doug Courchene, is not the end of the story.

Doug is planning a squeal to his book. The first book covered the years 1935 to 1970. The squeal will bring Air Force Fire Emergency Services forward into the 21st Century. Air Force Fire Chief Donald Warner has been asked for his staff's support. Doug has assign co-authors to each chapter. He will write Chapter 1, Beyond Pioneers, Next Generation.

Chapter 2, Selected Pioneer Biographies (open).

Chapter 3, Operations (open) volunteers needed for open chapters.

Chapter 4, Chief Barrow, topic (Education & Training).

Chapter 5, Mr. James O'Regan, Crash Trucks (noted authority).

Chapter 6, Mrs. Iris McWhirter, Wives and Widows). Iris is Chief Frank Joseph's widow.

Note: see Iris story in Doug's book, Chapter 6.

Co-authors will be on their own; and do what freelance writers do best. Doug does not plan to rewrite or revise their manuscripts but there may be some minor tweaks to satisfy the publisher. That should be done locally with editors in their community. The worse thing a writer can do is let someone in the family be a critic. That is often disastrous. Doug wants more **active** chiefs and less retired this time around. A mixture is fine. He is excited about his part, as are the co-authors, who are equally ambitious.

Request that Doug be contacted ASAP by Fire Chiefs that want to be a co-author. Also, if you

have not submitted your autobiography, now is the time. (See Don Warner's article later in this edition for another reason to complete your autobiography)

E-mail your bio to chief.one@cox.net.

Pioneers with Intent was first published in cooperation with the History Office, Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency, Tyndall AFB, Florida, in July 2003. In June 2006, Doug gave permission for the electronic version of the book to be posted on DoDFire.com where it is still available to download.

Chief Charlie Wellwood

By Chief Doug Courchene



The Late Chief Charlie

Wellwood was the chief at March AFB CA, now realigned to an Air Reserve Base, due to BRAC. Doug as the Fire Department NCOIC 1958 to 1960,

remembers March AFB as a choice assignment. He had "zero" complaints from his military Firefighters.



Chief Wellwood was best described as "immaculate." There was nothing high tech as you see him setting at his desk. He was a fair and pleasantly gentle man to work with. Later, while stationed in Spain near Sevilla, Doug had a Spanish artist capture the chief on canvas from a black and white photo. The color oil painting was sent to the chief to hang in his retirement home in San Bernardino CA.

Well done Doug. I remember the scene well...Gray metal desk, but mine was never that clean. Anyone else have a favorite chief they would like remember? ...Editor

Reminiscing...



ATC Fire Simulator at Chanute AFB, IL, Left to Right: Instructor TSgt Randy Moore, not known next 3, TSgt R. Carlton and TSgt Terrell Elliott from Eglin AFB FL.

1975-1993: The Fire School became officially known as the "Fire Protection Training Division" and continued the course set by CWO4 Louis Garland, by steadily upgrading the quality of training provided. The Advanced Fire Technology course was developed in 1978 and the Major General Norma Brown AFB Simulator was built to support the course at a cost of \$180,000.

1993 – Present: Chanute was closed on 1 Sep 1993 by the BRAC Commission and

Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo TX was chosen as the new home for the “CWO4 Louis F. Garland DoD Fire Academy.” The school also expanded to train all DoD firefighters and became accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Hundreds of fire fighters representing each service are trained and certified each year.

outstanding NCOs accepted Base Fire Chief or Command Representative jobs throughout the military services.

Agent Orange...

Exposure to Agent Orange: Especially, Vietnam veterans, January 9, 1962 – May 5, 1975 are presumed by the Veterans

Administration to be victims of Agent Orange, if they have been treated for certain cancers or they are diabetics. People who did not serve in Vietnam includes everyone who worked in the manufacturing of Agent Orange, Agent Purple and other toxic herbicides connected to “Operation Ranch Hand,” maybe covered. Eglin AFB conducted aerial spray testing of these toxins in the 1960s. At the same time, Eglin Fire



Left to Right: Pete Semanick, James Wells, Major Lou Gott (Commandant), Bill Tibbetts, Ruben Whately, Richard Duncan, George Greethust and John Coughin. Maj Gen Norma Brown, Center Commander, called the Fire School Staff and Instructors her unofficial “Chanute Ambassadors.” Some of the NCO Instructors from the Lou Garland era that made Chief Master Sergeant were: Donald Warner, Bryce Mason, Wayne Kee, Bill Lonsford, Gerald Wimberly, Bill Thompson, George Hall, Paul Sutphin, Mike Boley, Ralph Mc Henry, David J. Keen, Ed Doughty, Rocky Cook, Randy Wilke, Larry Mundy, Ray Wuilliez, Billy Norman, Robert Vires, Kenneth Ploense, Richard Duncan, Richard Marshal, Steve Haidinger and Bob Throbridge. After retirement, most of these

Fighters, military and civilian, washed C-123 bays and containers of toxic agents used after the test. They were not required to use self-contained breathing apparatus or chemical suits during the flightline washdowns. Drums of Agents Orange and Agent Purple were also found at the fire training area. The Veterans Administration websites <http://www.va.gov> and <http://www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov> are sources for more information concerning toxic agents.

Everyone suspected of Agent Orange exposure should place their names on record with the VA. Do not wait! Some veterans of WWII experienced hardships getting treatment they deserved because records were lost, or no record was created. You lose track of buddies,

people pass away, and memories grow dim. Act now!...Editor

SICK CALL – PRAYERS URGENTLY NEEDED



Praise the Lord -- he works in ways of mystery. A chance encounter with a young Army Disable Veteran in Tampa FL, on the internet, has resulted in his offer of a donated kidney. I

have contacted Tampa General Medical Center to do the testing for the donor and me. If that works out, the kidney transplantation will take place as soon as possible. The Transplant Team estimates that I will be in Tampa 2 to 3 months after surgery for recovery and follow-up.

A donated kidney is a wonderful gift of life from the dialysis treatments that I must do 4 hours a day, 3 X weekly. Praise the Lord!

My wife, Nan's hip fractures on each side are healing nicely without pain.

Steve Moak, our PREDRO buddy, pedronews@kootenet.org had a stumble in life, but the "GOOD LORD" Still has plans for him. On Saturday 27 October, Steve had a disc blow in that impinged on his spinal cord. He lost most feeling and control in both legs. He was medi-vaced from Libby MT to Seattle WA in a Beech King-Air 350 and operated on at Harbor View Trauma Medical Center. He is now on his way back to a long, hard recovery process. As soon as his immediate medical needs are met at Harbor-View Trauma Center and a bed becomes available, he will be transferred to the "Spinal Cord Trauma Ward" of the Seattle V.A. Our prayers are with Steve for a full and speedy recovery.

Honoring our Pioneers

By Donald W. Donald Warner

Major General Eulberg, The Air Force Civil Engineer, has approved the creation of firefighter awards to match the DoD firefighter awards.

General Eulberg also approved naming the awards in honor of deserving individuals. But first, he asked us to develop procedures that would be used to select individuals to be honored. We have developed the procedures and they are on their way to him for approval. Then we will be accepting nominations.

I know there are many very deserving pioneers and retirees. However, there are only eight awards so the competition is expected to be fierce.

Of course there will be rules. As soon as we know the approved rules, I'll post them on dodfire.com.

I'm still working on other opportunities to honor our pioneers by naming classrooms, fire stations, etc., in their honor. Even though no progress has been made, I'm not dead yet and I will persevere!

Sergeants Joe Jarrell & Bill Chilson



Selfridge AFB, MI, 31 December 1964, Sergeants Joe Jarrell and Bill Chilson at their Joint Retirement Ceremony.

They had a combine total of over 40 years

of Military service. Each had joined the Armed Forces during WW II. Joe was with the 41st Infantry "Setting Sun" Division that took the Philippine Islands and was known for their Occupation of Japan. Bill was with the U.S. Navy Pacific Fleet and served in their China Campaign. After WW II, they both joined the Air Force and were assigned as Fire Protection Specialist/Supervisors. Both had held fire chief positions at various times during their careers. At Selfridge AFB, Joe was the NCOIC of the Fire Department and Bill was the Station Chief in charge of a firefighting shift. Joe and Bill both had distinguished service records and were outstanding NCOs. I have had the pleasure of knowing of both Joe's and Bill's accomplishments. Bill and I served together in Korea, through 3 Battle Campaigns, and at Kelly AFB TX as Air Force firefighters in 1952. I met Joe in 2003 at Dallas TX at a "Pioneer's Day Gathering" of Retired Air Force fire chiefs.

Joe has been a stalwart supporter for the retirees both in networking and in keeping the Retired Chiefs together. I am proud to have him on my team; and my "Texas Connection". Joe's and

Bill's e-mail addresses are noted should you want to contact them directly. Bill's email: redshamrock@comcast.net and Joe's email: firechief6736@yahoo.com.

Best wishes to Joe and Bill. You make my job as the QNN Editor a pleasure. Hope we can get together for the next "Pioneer Day Gathering" scheduled for Dallas in August 2009.



My son, Frank, NAS Pensacola Assistant Fire Chief and I attended this year's DoD Fire & Emergency Services Training Conference and the ICHIEF's "Fire-Rescue International". The ICHIEFs had over 16,000 in attendance and the DoD had over 3,000 fire officers. We also attended the EXPO Hall and Presidential Celebration, plus the DoD's Award Banquets and Exhibits.

Chief Roger Miller (center rear row) is a Retired AF CMSgt and former Myrtle Beach AFB Fire Chief. Congratulations to Roger and his team!



Fire Department of the Year

(Large Category)

Ft. Bragg, North Carolina (Army)

Located at the Army's premiere power projection platform, the Ft. Bragg Fire & Emergency Services serve a community of 250,000 personnel who live, work, train and deploy to defend America. The department responded to over 7,100 emergencies and incidents during the year, with fire losses reduced by over 65 percent from the prior year! Department undertook a number of new initiatives that included providing specialized rescue training for 400 deploying Special Forces soldiers and airmen; developing an effective Pandemic Emergency Action Plan and offering a highly effective Unit Fire Marshal's Program that trained over 650 in fire safety (twice the number trained during the previous year). As well as moving key elements into a new consolidated 911 Center; and upgrading living quarters through self-help in fire stations.



Happy Holidays

